

Translation of recorded delivery letter from Bouju Derambure
Bugnion to the European Patent Office, Rijswijk,
Netherlands, dated 29 June 2004

OUR REF: 10F317 12WO041/TGE/AMI/MBI

RE: INTERNATIONAL PATENT APPLICATION NO.
PCT/FR03/02660 OF 05.09.03

SUBJECT: RETRACTABLE ROOF FOR CONVERTIBLE VEHICLE

COUNTRY: INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

OBSERVATIONS

In response to the first written opinion, the applicant is filing a new set of claims in which the new Claim 1 is a combination of the initial Claims 1 and 2.

Page 2 of the description has been amended accordingly.

The new Claim 1 includes the characteristic according to which the retractable roof comprises first means of driving the first arm in rotation with respect to the vehicle chassis and second means of driving the second arm in rotation with respect to the first arm.

None of the documents cited describes a retractable roof comprising all the characteristics of the new Claim 1.

Consequently the invention as newly claimed is novel with respect to any one of the documents cited.

Moreover, no combination of the documents cited by the examiner suggests the technical solution of the invention, which makes it possible to control in an optimum fashion the movement of the first and second arms so as to allow the storage of the rear part of the roof in a rear boot with a shorter useful length.

Consequently, the invention as newly claimed also exhibits an inventive step with respect to the documents cited.

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Appendices:

- New set of claims
- (Page 2 of) the amended description
- Form 1037

arm articulated on the vehicle chassis and which is guided in its movement by a runner extending in the boot.

Such a device for moving the rear part of the boot does however have a drawback. When the length of the rear boot is reduced by accessories such as the location of the rear lights, the length of movement of the rear part may become insufficient so that it is impossible to store this rear roof part in the boot.

The present invention aims to mitigate this drawback.

More particularly, the aim of the invention is to provide a movement system adapting to a reduced boot length.

To this end, the object of the invention is first of all a retractable roof for a motor vehicle, comprising at least one front roof element and one rear roof element, rigid and able to be moved between a closed position in which they cover the vehicle cabin and a storage position in which they are stored in the rear boot of the vehicle, the rear element being arranged so as to be moved by means of pivoting arms and guided by runners extending in the boot, this retractable roof comprising a first arm articulated transversely to the plane of symmetry of the vehicle, at a first of its ends on the vehicle chassis and at its second end on a first end of a second arm articulated at its second end on the said rear element, also transversely to the plane of symmetry of the vehicle, the roof comprising first means of driving the first arm in rotation with respect to the vehicle chassis and second means of driving the second arm in rotation with respect to the first arm.

Naturally, this arrangement can be repeated on both sides of the vehicle, which thus comprises four articulated arms.

This double articulation of a first arm on the vehicle

CLAIMS

1. A retractable roof for a motor vehicle, comprising at least one front roof element (4) and one rear roof element, rigid and able to be moved between a closed position in which they cover the vehicle cabin (2) and a storage position in which they are stored in the rear boot (3) of the vehicle, the rear element being arranged so as to be moved by means of pivoting arms and guided by runners (19) extending in the boot, the said roof comprising a first arm (7) articulated transversely to the plane of symmetry of the vehicle, at a first (8) of its ends on the vehicle chassis and at its second end (12) on a first end of a second arm (13) articulated at its second end (14) on the said rear element, also transversely to the plane of symmetry of the vehicle, characterised by the fact it comprises first means (9) of driving the first arm in rotation with respect to the vehicle chassis and second means (15) of driving the second arm in rotation with respect to the first arm.

2. A roof according to Claim 1, characterised by the fact that it comprises means (22) of synchronising the said first and second driving means.

3. A roof according to Claim 2, characterised by the fact that the said synchronisation means are arranged so as to cause firstly actuation of the first driving means and then the actuation of the second driving means.

4. A motor vehicle, characterised by the fact that it comprises a retractable roof according to any one of Claims 1 to 3.